

## AP 46

### 1 and 2 Chronicles / דְּבָרֵי הַיָּמִים / Dib-rey Hay-yamim

#### The Words/Matters/Events of the Days

Like Leviticus, Chronicles is not beloved in the church. In our Bible it comes right after Samuel and Kings, almost ensuring we view it as history, and worse a repeated history that we just read. Another reason we don't like Chronicles is that if you like reading books in the order they come then with the book of Chronicles you are confronted with 9 chapters of extended genealogy! Readers today ask, "Why am I reading this at all?" and "Why am I reading this again?"

In the Hebrew Bible Chronicles is not connected to Samuel and Kings, in fact, it is the last book of the Hebrew Bible – is it a summary? It is not even considered to be part of the same genre as the two previous histories Samuel and Kings. Samuel and Kings are part of the prophets (Nevi'im), Chronicles is part of the Writings (Ketuvim). Since the Jews read it with a different lens, maybe we should too.

I think of it as a **theological history**, in which theology drives the story as much as, or more than, the historical events. The book is peppered with sermons and prayers. The importance of temple worship is pronounced. The Chronicler also interacts with other Biblical texts – principally the Psalms. It is history and more. I also think of it as **contextual history**, it was written after the exile, and speaks to the concerns of returning exiles. The focus is more forward looking (How do we move forward faithfully? Where do we find hope?) than backward looking (Why were we exiled? Why did God allow exile again?). This is part of the reason David and Solomon are presented so positively. When you read about the temple Building plans it feels like the tabernacle building plans of Moses. David is a "New Moses", and the promised Messiah is a "New and even Better David".

As mentioned above, the book begins with genealogy. Beginning with Adam (1 Chronicles 1:1) and continues through the next 9 chapters! Ouch! However it is because of these 9 chapters that we can see the scope of their/our story. It begins in pre-history and concludes with the major news story of that time - Cyrus' decree (2 Chronicles 36:23) that points to a future beyond our lives. You might say the book has an unmatched scope. Also notice the clear focus of the genealogies - the priesthood from Aaron (faithfulness theme), and the genealogies of the promised Messiah through David (Hope Theme).

The power of Chronicles is it reminds readers today that they are part of something as long-lived as humanity itself. We may have anxiety about a particular church, or the church in America, but the Church universal has unfailing staying power. In the book, we see the story of the church – persisting through good and bad times. Ultimately, God's purposes are always accomplished. Secondly, in this book, we see how important faithful worship, persistent prayer and godly leadership is. Thirdly, we see the church is going somewhere – into God's will and promises. Our lives have purpose and meaning! Lastly, even when it seems God has failed, He

surprises us – the last verses show how he can use a Persian King (the most powerful person in the world at the time) to accomplish His purposes. Enjoy.

**Sunday, Nov 6**      1 Chronicles 14

**For Reflection:** This is a success chapter. The Book of Chronicles does not focus on David's weakness (12 years of running from Saul) or his sin (Bathsheba is left out). From David will come the Messiah. *What characteristics of David does the Chronicler highlight? How is "inquiring of the Lord" part of your day-to-day life?*

**Lagniappe:** Philippians 4:6-7

**Monday, Nov 7**      1 Chronicles 17

**For Reflection:** In the first verses David expresses his intention to build a temple and God says "No". *What are the biggest "No's" you have heard from God? How does David respond to God's "No"?* In this chapter we read of the Davidic Covenant (10b-14) ultimately fulfilled in the Messiah. This is part of the forward-looking aspect of this book.

**Lagniappe:** Matthew 26:36-45

**Tuesday, Nov 8**      1 Chronicles 28

**For Reflection:** This whole section 22-29 is unique to Chronicles. The focus of this passage is the future Temple and the plans for the building it, and staffing it. This 8-chapter passage parallels Moses' being given plans for the tabernacle in Exodus 25-31 & 36-39. I think of this as a legacy chapter. *What legacy are you passing down to others?*

**Lagniappe:** Proverbs 13:22

**In 2 Chronicles there are 5 renewals/revivals/reforms among the Kings of Judah. These Renewals will serve as our focus.**

**Wednesday, Nov 9**      2 Chronicles 15

**For Reflection:** Asa is the great, great, grandson of David. He ruled ~ 911-870 BCE. Influenced by the prophet Azariah, Asa oversees a national faith renewal that peaks in his 15th year of his 41-year rule. Asa's faith is not private, in verse 9 he assembled all Judah to renew the covenant in Jerusalem. *Is your faith relatively*

*unknown among your neighbors, colleagues, family, and friends, or is your faith common knowledge?*

**Lagniappe:** Matthew 5:16

**Thursday, Nov 10** 2 Chronicles 20

**For Reflection:** Kings, like the rest of us, are sometimes strong and sometimes weak in their faith. If we would have also read chapter 16, along with 15 yesterday, we would have found this was true of Asa. The Jehoshaphat story starts hopefully yet ends sadly. *What about the end of our working life makes faithfulness difficult?*

**Lagniappe:** 2 Timothy 4:7-8

**Friday, Nov 11** 2 Chronicles 29

**For Reflection:** During Hezekiah's reign God delivered the nation from the Assyrian Empire (recorded in chapter 32). The only nation in the middle east to survive as independent. He was influenced by Isaiah. Chapter 29 tells us how he began. *What aspect of your life is God calling you to rededicate to the Lord?*

**Lagniappe:** 2 Chronicles 7:14

**Saturday, Nov 12** 2 Chronicles 34

**For Reflection:** Josiah – hey we found this book, while we were remodeling/repairing the Temple, we think it might be important. *What place does the Bible have in your day to day life?*

**Lagniappe:** Hebrews 4:12